

Message Text

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FROM CHARGE
E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SHUM
SUBJECT: CHAIRMAN OF WORLD CONFERENCE TO COMBAT RACISM
AND RACIAL DISCRIMINATION (AUGUST 24-25)

REF: STATE 197025

1. ACCOMPANIED BY POLITICAL COUNSELOR GRIP, I CALLED ON
C. V. NARASIMHAN, SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE UPCOMING WORLD
CONFERENCE TO COMBAT RACISM AND RACIAL DISCRIMINATION, TO
GET HIS FEELING FOR THE WAY THE CONFERENCE IS LIKELY TO
BE ORGANIZED AND THE DIRECTION IT IS LIKELY TO TAKE.

2. NARASIMHAN RAN THROUGH THE ORGANIZATION OF THE CON-
FERENCE, WHICH WILL HAVE A PRESIDENT, TEN VICE-PRESIDENTS
SELECTED ON A REGIONAL BASIS (TWO FROM EACH REGION), AND
CHAIRMAN OF TWO COMMITTEES. IN ADDITION, THERE WILL BE
A CONFERENCE RAPPORTEUR, BUT INASMUCH AS THERE WILL NOT BE
A SUMMARY RECORD OF THE CONFERENCE ITSELF. THIS POSITION
IS NOT REGARDED AS SIGNIFICANT. ON THE OTHER HAND, THE
RAPPORTEURS OF EACH OF THE COMMITTEES MAY PLAY A FAIRLY
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SIGNIFICANT ROLE IN THE PREPARATION OF THE FINAL DOCU-
MENTS, CONSISTING OF (1) A DECLARATION AND (2) A PROGRAM
OF ACTION.

3. WITH RESPECT TO THE PRESIDENCY OF THE CONFERENCE,
NARASIMHAN CONFIRMED THAT EVERYONE HAS AGREED THAT THIS
SHOULD GO TO AN AFRICAN. HE HAS MADE KNOWN TO THE HEAD OF

THE AFRICAN CAUCUS HIS VIEW THAT THE PRESIDENT MUST BE AN ESPECIALLY STRONG INDIVIDUAL, PRINCIPALLY TO KEEP ORDER IN DEALING WITH THE ARABS AND RADICAL AFRICANS. HE SAID THAT, IN HIS VIEW, NIGERIA WOULD PROVIDE AN EXCELLENT CANDIDATE FOR PRESIDENT. HE HAD LEARNED ONLY THIS MORNING (AUGUST 9) THAT THE NIGERIAN FOREIGN MINISTER WILL HEAD THE NIGERIAN DELEGATION.

4. TO EVERYONE'S CONSTERNATION AND ANNOYANCE, THE CUBANS HAVE ALREADY PRESENTED THEMSELVES AS A CANDIDATE FOR THE CHAIRMANSHIP OF ONE OR THE OTHER OF THE TWO COMMITTEES. UNLESS THE CUBANS WITHDRAW THIS UNILATERAL CANDIDACY AND ALLOW THE USUAL PROCESS OF REGIONAL NOMINATIONS, NARASIMHAN FORESEES A BITTER AND DEVISIVE FIGHT ON THE FLOOR. HE IS WORKING BEHIND THE SCENES TO ENCOURAGE THE LATIN AMERICANS TO INDUCE THE CUBANS TO WITHDRAW THEIR CANDIDACY IN EXCHANGE FOR ONE OF THE VICE-PRESIDENCIES FROM THE LATIN AMERICAN REGION.

5. NARASIMHAN BELIEVES THAT THE SUCCESS OF THE CONFERENCE WILL TURN ON TWO ISSUES: (1) HOW THE ZIONISM-RACISM ISSUE IS HANDLED, AND (2) THE QUESTION OF SANCTIONS AGAINST SOUTH AFRICA. ON THE ZIONISM-RACISM ISSUE, HE SAID THERE IS NO WAY THAT EXPRESSIONS OF VIEWS ON THIS ISSUE CAN BE AVOIDED ON THE FLOOR SINCE ARAB DELEGATIONS ARE CERTAINLY GOING TO BRING IT UP. SINCE THERE WILL BE NO SUMMARY RECORD, THE PROBLEM, AS HE SEES IT, WILL ARISE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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IF THERE IS PRESSURE TO INCORPORATE A ZIONISM-RACISM ELEMENT IN THE FINAL ACTS OF THE CONFERENCE. HE IS ALSO CONCERNED THAT RADICAL AFRICANS NOT TRY TO INCORPORATE INTO THE FINAL ACTS A CALL FOR SANCTIONS AGAINST SOUTH AFRICA.

6. NARASIMHAN AGAIN EXPRESSED THE URGENT HOPE THAT THE UNITED STATES WOULD BE ABLE TO ISSUE A HIGH LEVEL MESSAGE TO THE CONFERENCE. HE SAID THAT, ON THE OCCASION OF A NUMBER OF PRESS INTERVIEWS, THE MATTER OF U.S. NON-PARTICIPATION INVARIABLY ARISES AND ALWAYS PRODUCES FURTHER QUESTIONS ABOUT THE UNITED STATES' COMMITMENT TO THE OBJECTIVES OF THE CONFERENCE. HE FEELS THAT A STRONG STATEMENT WHICH MADE CLEAR OUR COMMITMENT TO THE COMBATING OF RACISM AND RACIAL DISCRIMINATION, DESPITE OUR INABILITY TO PARTICIPATE IN THE CONFERENCE, WOULD GO FAR TO CLEAR THE AIR. DRAWING ON REFTTEL, WE SAID THAT THIS POSSIBILITY WAS STILL UNDER CONSIDERATION AND THAT NO DECISION HAS YET BEEN MADE. SORENSON

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